

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY



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RUTHERFORD
LIBRARY

History of the Library

by Bruce Peel

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON

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BARD



Mr. Donald Ewing Cameron, 1921-1945



Miss Marjorie Sherlock, 1945-1955
(Mrs. H. Grayson-Smith)

LIBRARIANS
TO THE
UNIVERSITY



Mr. Bruce Peel, 1955-

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

EDMONTON
1965



EX LIBRIS
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTÆNSIS

This outline history was drafted in May, 1964, in preparation for the official opening of the Donald Ewing Cameron Library, and is now published so that the traditions of the Library may be preserved for our changing staff.

HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY

BEGINNINGS

In 1909 when the University of Alberta opened its doors, the Senate allocated the sum of \$5,000 to purchase books for a library. With this sum and through gifts, the Library had acquired a collection of 6,000 books by 1911. Three years later the collection was described in the university calendar as being nearly 12,000 books. During the disruption of World War I, the Library grew slowly, for in 1920-21 it had only 17,000 volumes.

FIRST LIBRARIAN

The first Librarian was Miss Eugenie Archibald, B.A., who held the position from 1909 to 1911; she was the first of many score of young women who have left the employ of the library for marriage and homemaking. The following year Mr. Cecil Race, the Registrar, was Acting Librarian. In 1912 Mr. Frank Gresty Bowers, M.A. (Oxon.), was appointed Librarian, a position he held for eight years.

SECOND LIBRARIAN

Mr. Bowers was born in 1863 in Chester, England, and after graduating from Worcester College, Oxford, taught at Kingswood School at Bath for eight years. Later he accepted a headmastership at Nassau in the Bahamas, taught in Toronto, and in 1907 came West with his family to accept a post in the attorney-general's department of the new province of Alberta. Known as a book lover and himself in possession of an extensive private library, he was appointed University Librarian.*

During his tenure of office he was stricken by a lingering illness. Dr. W. H. Alexander, in his little book, University of Alberta--A Retrospect 1908-1929, speaks of Mr. Bowers during World War I knitting socks for the Soldiers' Comforts Club; "one of the best knitters was the late Mr. F. G. Bowers, who [thus] relieved the monotony of a bed of pain."

The first library reading room was no doubt established in the Dugan St. (now Queen Alexandra) public school, where university classes were first held. In 1911 Athabasca Hall, a combined residence and teaching building, opened its doors, with the Library domiciled on the third floor; to again quote Dr. Alexander, "The Library was on the floor nearest to heaven--such a getting-up stairs!"

IN THE ARTS BUILDING

The new Arts Building, when it opened in 1915, provided an attractive oak-paneled reading room (Room 110) with a seating capacity of eighty, and with a stack room on the ground floor below; in the early

*"An appreciation of F. G. Bowers", by Dean Kerr. The Trail, v.1, 1921, p.9

period the reading area also had an alcove in the south end for periodicals. The new quarters were no doubt considered an extravagant provision of space, but a book collection keeps growing, and in less than a decade the Library was overflowing its stacks.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

A "Committee on the Library", as it was first called, was formed about 1915 having as its membership, in addition to the Librarian, President Tory and Professors Alexander, McEachern, and Sheldon. The formation of the Committee likely coincided with the opening of the Library in the Arts Building. About 1920, the membership of the Committee on the Library was increased.

The first minutes of the Committee extant are dated May 27, and are either for 1919 or 1920 as no year is given. At a meeting held on December 22, 1920, President Tory reported that "Mr. Bowers' health was very precarious, and it was not quite clear yet how long it would be before he would be back in the Library". On May 3, 1921, the minutes record that "the President briefly referred to the death of Mr. Bowers and the appointment of Mr. Cameron to the librarianship."

EARLY GIFTS

Through the years the records contain references to gifts of books to the Library. The first description of the Library, as contained in the university calendar, states that a special feature of the collection was the books on Canadian history donated by Dr. A. C. Rutherford. Many years later his private library was to form the strength of our Canadiana collection and the beginning of our rare book room. In 1915 a valuable gift of books on Anglo-Saxon literature and general English literature was donated by Miss Marian Gill. Since, in the year of writing this history, the world celebrates the quadricentennial of Shakespeare's birth, it is interesting to read a resolution passed by the Committee on the Library thanking Mr. E. F. Slocock for a copy of the Shakespeare Tercentenary Memorial Volume, specially bound and stamped with the seal of the University. "Resolved this Committee accept with pleasure this choice gift to the Library of the University of Alberta, and authorize the chairman to convey to Mr. E. F. Slocock their appreciation alike of the good will which the gift expresses and of the beauty and value of the gift itself."

CAMERON ERA

The next phase of the University Library's development should perhaps be called the Cameron Era for Mr. Donald Ewing Cameron held the position of Librarian from 1921 to 1945. Elsewhere tribute has been paid to his scholarship, his searching mind, and his influence on academic colleagues and university students alike.* During his long years of administration, external conditions were to dictate the development of the Library. There was the period of prairie drought and economic depression which darkened the decade of the Thirties, and then came World War II. But first must be written the story of the quiet progress of the 1920's and the plans for a new Library building.

*Macdonald, John. The New Trail, v.5, 1947, p. 266-269

LIBRARY FEE

Being a canny Scot, Mr. Cameron early looked into the matter of finance, and would seem to have introduced two features of the book budget which were to remain for many years. The first was to levy a fee of \$5.00 per student upon registration; the fee was first levied in 1922. This remained the source of the book fund until 1958-59. The second feature was to establish the principle that at the end of the fiscal year the unspent portion of the book fund was retained by the Library as a reserve fund; this was necessary because the Library received its revenue in the middle of the fiscal year. Both these measures were to give the Library's acquisitions program greater stability.

BOOK FUND DEPLETED

A story is told that in the early 1920's the Librarian was absent for a few weeks, and that during his absence one of the scientific departments presented an argument for immediately ordering a famous scientific set, and obtained the President's approval. When the Librarian returned he found that the set had been ordered, but since the cost of the set about equalled the total revenue from students' fees, the book fund had been depleted for the year.

By 1928 accessions had reached 30,000, and by 1932, 45,085 volumes. In 1928 the Edmonton Academy of Medicine transferred its collection of medical books to the University, an event of significance in the library operation because since then the medical library of the University has assumed responsibility for service to medical practitioners in the city and province.

BINDING

The first published report on the Library in 1928 makes the following reference to the binding of books.

The work of binding has been continued, and a great deal of improvement has been effected, making the material in the Library of easier access to readers. Since the binder began his work he had bound for the Library over 2,500 volumes, and has reduced an immense amount of loose material to bound volumes. There has been done the equivalent of about five years' binding, and it may be expected that when all arrears are overtaken there will be need to bind at least 500 volumes each year.

The binder alluded to was Mr. Pyewell, a skillful craftsman, who served as university binder until about 1959. For many years all binding was done on the campus, but as periodical subscriptions increased the Library sent more titles to outside binders. By 1963-64 perhaps over two-thirds of the 6400 volumes bound were done by commercial binderies.

SPACE PROBLEMS

A continuing theme running through Mr. Cameron's annual reports was the problem of space for books and readers in the Library, and the make-shift arrangements by which the Library carried on from year to year; nearly a quarter of a century was to elapse before the space problem was solved with the opening of the Rutherford Library in 1951, and that would not be in Mr. Cameron's life time. Presumably because of the inadequacy of the space within the Library in the Arts Building, by 1922 medical and agriculture library reading rooms were set up in other areas. The following year a new reading room was opened in the Arts Building, for law students. The first report of the Librarian extant, that covering the fifteen months ending in March, 1928, states that "there has been great pressure on the space available for readers; in the morning there has often been no place to sit." To this the President of the University, in speaking of the pressing needs of the institution, added that "the overcrowding (in the Library) necessary to accommodate the students, even in part, has made the ventilation problem, always a difficult one, almost insupportable". The President, speaking also of overcrowding in teaching buildings, said that relief would best be obtained by the erection of a library building to house as well the extension services, the Law School, and senior classes in English and history.

LIBRARY BUILDING REQUESTED

The rise and fall of the idea of a separate library building may be traced through the reports of the Board of Governors. In 1928 it was accepted that the next building on the campus must be a library. The following year President Wallace said that the building of a library could not now be delayed longer. In view of the selection in 1960 of the site for the D. E. Cameron Library, it is interesting to quote the President on the need and the location.

Relief will be obtained in all directions by the new library building, planned to meet the temporary needs of the University in the directions indicated, as well as the permanent need of the University for a modern library building, and ultimately to be devoted wholly to that end. The position which it is planned that the new building occupy--facing west on the main University thoroughfare between the Arts building and the residences--is a central position among the University buildings, and all departmental libraries may be consolidated in the building without inconvenience, and with a relief of space to the departments concerned.

In his next report, March, 1930, the President wrote:

The library building asked for last year

is an urgent necessity. Not only is the library much overcrowded and quite inadequate for the needs of the University as it now is, but relief will be obtained in the library building for the Extension Department, now very unsatisfactorily housed, and for the Applied Science courses for which 7,000 square feet of floor space will be set aside in the library building temporarily for drafting room purposes. It is unnecessary to elaborate a situation which is critical.

The following year, 1931, with the depression deepening the President wrote:

The Government did not feel justified in view of the economic conditions in voting capital in whole or in part for the Library building. It has been necessary to endeavour to carry on.

At the end of 1933, a last effort was made to obtain a library building. President Wallace reported that the Carnegie Corporation had given a grant to the University of \$50,000 to further some single project of value to the institution.

After careful consideration had been given to the matter, it was decided that if by means of the grant impetus could be given to the plan to erect a library building, a service of first importance would be rendered to the whole institution in relieving the greatly congested quarters which now serve for stacks and reading room purposes. The possibility was explored of utilizing part of the relief funds which the federal authorities were to grant to the province for building purposes to aid in the erection of the library building, and of using the \$50,000 grant to assist in the project. A decision was reached at Ottawa, however, that this fund would not be applied in any province to university buildings. As no provincial funds were available, it was necessary, through with reluctance, to abandon the plan of a library building in connection with the grant...

COLLECTION DURING DEPRESSION

During depression years of the 1930's, when retrenchment was the order of the day, it is surprising that the Library continued to develop its book collection steadily. Between 1930 and 1939 the Li-



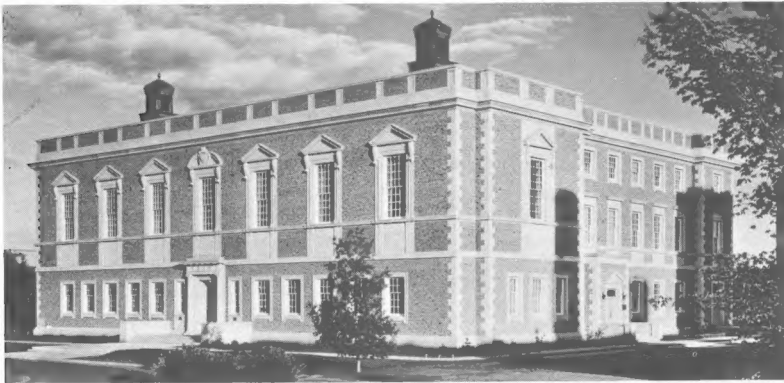
Rutherford Library -
Laying the
cornerstone,
November 25,
1948



Library staff - May, 1951



The Site as excavation begins -
Miss D. I. Hamilton, Miss L. E. M. Leversedge, Miss N. E. Freifield



Rutherford
Library -
1951

President Robert Newton unveiling mural
at the official opening, May 15, 1951





D. E. Cameron Library - Mrs. Cameron
assisted by her son cuts the ribbon
May 28, 1964

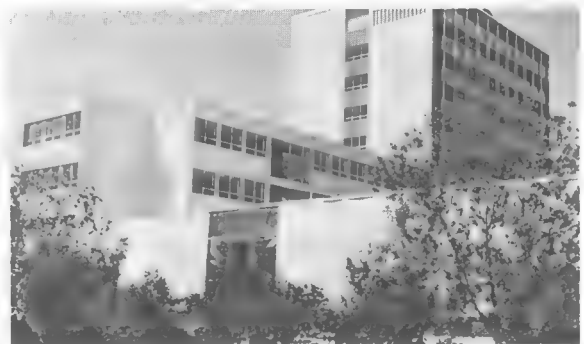


The Friends' gift to the Library
Mr. G. M. Peacock to Mr. B. Peel



Cameron Library - Occupied November, 1963

The Alumni's gift to the Library
Dr. D. R. Stanley to Dr. Ruth Godwin



Education Library wing (with the Education
Building in background) - Occupied September, 1963

brary added about 25,000 volumes, for by the latter year accessions number 67,082. The book fund was derived from a fee of \$5.00 levied on each student at registration. Consequently, revenue from this source remained fairly constant at a time when the money voted by the provincial legislature, because of the economic conditions, was reduced in two years from \$588,388 to \$375,000. At the beginning of the depression period the Librarian, in his annual report of 1931-32, refers to the building up of back files of journals from grants the university administration had made for this purpose in recent years. In 1932, when the depression was at its worst, the Carnegie Corporation made a grant of \$15,000 available over a three-year period for the purchase of books.

The Librarian, in his report for 1932-33, says as follows:

An outstanding event of the year was the visit of Mr. Hugh C. Gourlay*, representing the Carnegie Corporation of New York, in the early part of the summer. Mr. Gourlay spent a few days with us, and following on his report the Canadian Advisory Committee of Carnegie Corporation recommended that we be awarded a portion of the grant being made to College Libraries. In December the University received the first instalment of a sum of \$15,000 to be paid in three yearly parts for the purchase of books to reinforce the Library, with particular attention to the work of the Arts College. This munificent gift has greatly stimulated the Library, and will be of greatest value to us.

SPACE

Throughout the decade the Librarian's constant theme is the problem of space for readers and book storage, and various emergency measures taken. Some time during this period the Library began housing its less used books and bound periodicals in an underground passageway known as the wind tunnel; here they became impregnated with grit and sand.

WAR AND THE BOOK TRADE

The disruption to the university Library's acquisition program during World War II is mentioned in each annual report. Mr. Cameron commented as follows on the book trade in 1941.

Under war conditions many difficulties have to be met. Deliveries are slower everywhere, and in the case of British books there is often a long delay, and as a result an unusually long portion of book

*Mr. Gourlay later became Librarian of the Edmonton Public Library.

orders placed during the year remain unfilled. In some cases publishers lost their stock of books in print, and both stock and records of our London agents were destroyed. This loss in particular has involved an exceptional dislocation of the flow of books to us, and made necessary the repetition, after long delays of missing orders, and the restoration by us from our records of all details lost in London. As an effect of wartime restrictions, no steel shelving can at present be bought by us, and our stock is at a low ebb.

Restrictions continue in effect regarding books and journals from enemy-occupied countries, but arrangements are being made by libraries on this continent to restore our holdings of these, at least as far as they can later be made available in micro-film reproduction.

And, as in every annual report Mr. Cameron wrote, there is a problem of space.

The pressure on the Library space continues, and the problem of finding room for books is always with us, and adds greatly to the routine work of the staff.

POST WAR ERA BEGINS

Writing his last report in the spring of 1945, Mr. Cameron made reference to two events which were to dominate the next few years; the one was the Edmonton Normal School Library which came under the direction of the university Librarian when the Faculty of Education assumed responsibility for all teacher training in the province; the second was that the Librarian had held a first conference with Mr. A. S. Mather, the architect.

RETIREMENT

In September, 1945, Mr. Cameron terminated his long career as librarian. The next annual report paid this tribute to him:

Mr. Cameron will be greatly missed, by the students, by his colleagues of the faculty, and by the general public throughout the province. His wide scholarship and intimate knowledge of books, and his immense kindness and interest in people made him counsellor and friend as well as Librarian, and his departure from the Library leaves a gap which can never be wholly filled.

SHERLOCK DECADE

The next ten years of the Library's development were the Marjorie Sherlock decade. To the position she brought charm, imagination, and ability to obtain co-operation from people, and administrative competence. Born in Lethbridge and a graduate of the University of Alberta, she had begun her library career at the University of Saskatchewan. The latter library had also obtained a grant from the Carnegie Foundation for book acquisitions, but on condition the library abandon its home-made classification and hire a competent cataloguer. Miss Sherlock was the first cataloguer. Later she was chief cataloguer at Queen's University from which institution she came as Librarian to the University in 1945.

Miss Sherlock's first months as Librarian were hectic ones. With the influx of veterans, university enrolment swelled to the unprecedented figure of 3,300 students, and for these there were only 285 seats in the libraries; new reading-study areas were set aside. Then the education libraries in Calgary and Edmonton, which had been in temporary quarters during the War, and with many of their books in storage, had to be moved and thousands of books shelved in the month between Summer Session and the beginning of the Fall Term; many volumes in these libraries were catalogued over the next few years. And finally there was the planning of a new library building.

LIBRARIANS SALARIES

In the spring of 1946 a revised salary scale for professional librarians was introduced and academic status achieved. In 1945 a professional librarian with some years of experience received \$1,140 per year; the following year the lowest-paid librarian received \$1,600, and during the year government legislation made compulsory payment of a cost-of-living bonus to meet the rising costs after the ceiling was taken off prices. This bonus feature of university salaries remained in force until 1957. By way of comparison the salary scale for inexperienced professional librarians at the University of Alberta multiplied five times in the twenty years after 1945.

In Calgary the Education Library was reclassified in the Dewey scheme by staff sent from Edmonton during the summers of 1947 and 1948. In the former year six courses in Arts were introduced at Calgary, the beginning of the expansion of the curriculum and the development of the present campus in Calgary. Until the spring of 1960, all ordering and cataloguing of books for the Calgary Library was done by the processing departments in Edmonton. Because of the changed emphasis in the curriculum, the collection in Calgary was again reclassified, this time in the Library of Congress scheme; this project was begun in 1958 and completed in 1960. The Calgary Library by 1963 was operated completely independently of the Edmonton Library, and for the first time since 1944, the report of the Librarian to the University for 1963-64 did not include that of Calgary.

EDUCATION LIBRARY

The Education Library in Edmonton, when taken over, consisted of about 13,000 volumes of which perhaps 3,000 were uncatalogued. For the next several years the library was confined to one room, Room 218 on the main floor of the Education Building. Its stacks were crowded together and its four reading tables were jammed against the circulation desk. In the summer of 1955 this library expanded downward and upward to other floors, but the communications were so poor between the floors that the operation was most awkward.

PLANNING A BUILDING

During the winter of 1945-46 the plans for the construction of a new library building proceeded rapidly. On November 25, 1948, the Honorable John Campbell Bowen, Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, laid the cornerstone of the new library building. Work was to have continued on the building throughout the winter but because of the delay in the delivery of steel in the summer of 1948, the building could not be completed as intended by the fall of 1949. The next completion target was the summer of 1950, but then, owing to delays in the delivery of hardwoods, the completion target was moved to December, 1950. The building was completed three months later. In May 1951, the book collections from the various reading rooms and offices about the campus were moved to the new Rutherford Library. The 150,000 volumes were moved in eight days.

RUTHERFORD LIBRARY OPENED

The new library was named in honor of Dr. A. C. Rutherford, first premier of the province, and long-time chancellor of the University. The opening ceremony was held on May 15, in the reference reading room with 600 guests and members of the faculty present. The special speaker on this occasion was Dr. R. C. Wallace, principal of Queen's University, and formerly president of the University of Alberta. This ceremony was followed by a three-day open house during which an estimated 5,000 people were conducted over the building by members of the library staff. As the first new building on the campus, and one of the newest post-war public buildings in the city, the beautiful library building attracted a great deal of attention.

In settling into the new building there were initially many policy decisions to be made and regulations to be formalized; as these were carefully thought out the regulations and service pattern remain fairly constant for the decade of the 1950's. With the move to the Rutherford Library, the circulation department for the first time was separated from the reference department, but the latter still retained responsibility for periodicals, binding, and other special services; the responsibility for periodicals was divided between the reference and order departments until the periodicals department was set up ten years later. In 1952, the Library instituted fines on reserve books for the first time. In 1953, with the institution of courses in geography, the Library began its map col-

lection. In 1954, the position of Assistant Librarian was created and filled for the first time.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE

In 1950, the Library Committee, after a lapse of some years, was reorganized. The Committee consisted of all the deans, and of members of the Library Sub-Committee, an inner group that met more frequently and was responsible for giving the Librarian advice on problems as they arose in the operation of the Library. Dr. Thornton, head of the Department of Dairying, became the long-time chairman of the Library Sub-Committee. Often the chairman would come to the meetings with ice cream from the department's refrigerator, and thus developed the custom of serving refreshments at the meetings of this Committee. Perhaps it is this feature that caused many retiring members to say that they have never enjoyed committee work more.

RECLASSIFICATION

On April 8, 1952, the Cutter classification, long inadequate and outdated, was officially discontinued and new books in all subjects were classified in the Library of Congress scheme. This was the beginning of a reclassification project which was expected to take four years but actually took five to complete, and for which the Board of Governors initially voted \$28,000, and for the fifth year a supplementary grant of \$9,000. The cataloguing department was augmented by one professional cataloguer, one clerical, and part-time student help; during the project about 100,000 volumes were reclassified. Our library was perhaps the first on the continent to experiment with the new classification prepared by the American National Library of Medicine; the W classification was claimed to be the best scheme for medical books, but the library originating it has not kept it up to date. Our library is now reclassifying the medical collection according to the R scheme of the Library of Congress.

MISS SHERLOCK RESIGNS

In August 1955, Miss Sherlock resigned as Chief Librarian to marry Dr. H. Grayson-Smith, the head of the Department of Physics. As Chief Librarian she developed high staff morale and maintained excellent library public relations on the campus. She was recognized as an outstanding library administrator. The beautiful Rutherford Library stands as a monument to her planning.

DECADE OF THE FIFTIES

The decade of the 1950's as recorded by statistics showed a steady and healthy growth in attendance at the Library and in the use of library materials. In the autumn of 1951 the Gateway said editorially that the Rutherford Library had provided more reading space than would ever be used by students. The reading areas of the Library that first session had an uncrowded appearance, but the number of readers steadily increased until five years later the library administration was giving thought to the impending shortage of reader space.

GRADUATE PROGRAM

About 1957 the University began to offer graduate classes in various disciplines. The number and variety of graduate research programs has steadily expanded and has had a profound effect upon the development of the university Library. Prior to this revolution, the Library had thought of its collection as a good up-to-date collection for the use of undergraduate students, but with the introduction of graduate work the Library came under pressure to accelerate its acquisitions program to meet the ever-increasing needs of the university's graduate program.

BOOK FUND

As stated earlier the book fund was derived from a library fee levied on students. In the immediate post-war years, with the great influx of veterans, with the shortage of books caused by war time dislocation of the publishing industry, and with the lack of library space in which to put books, a large reserve fund was built up. After the opening of the Rutherford Library this reserve fund was drawn upon each year to supplement the revenue raised by student fees. In 1953 the Library Sub-Committee presented a brief to the Board of Governors pointing out the necessity of a larger book fund. The response of the Board was to increase the library fee from \$5.00 to \$8.00 per student. The fee system still did not raise enough money but it remained the main source of the book fund until 1958-59. After that year the book fund was obtained by submitting a sum in the Library's estimates. Since 1956-67 the book fund has increased eleven-fold.

At the end of World War II the book fund was \$6,758.00. The following year 1946-47, it doubled to \$14,884.00. It was not until 1954-55 that it reached \$30,000.00. In 1956-57 it was \$35,000.00. In successive years it has gone up as follows: \$54,000, \$66,000, \$100,000, \$162,000, \$210,000, \$250,000, \$370,000, \$410,000.

The number of accessioned books added during the first half of the decade averaged 9,000 volumes each year. Beginning in 1957-58, the annual acquisitions went up as follows: 11,716; 14,938; 21,771; 26,034; 34,739; 40,312; 49,577. Over the same period the Library each year added a larger number of documents, over 24,000 in 1963-64, and increasing quantities of micro materials.

SPACE NEEDS

In the fall of 1956, the Library Sub-Committee held seven meetings to study the space needs of the Rutherford Library over the next ten years. It is interesting to read that the Committee suggested the book collection would increase in the decade by a minimum of 100,000 volumes, while student enrolment was expected to rise to 6,500 at the end of the period; both projections were reached in five years. The Committee recommended that two additional tiers of stacks be placed on top of the existing stack block, but an engineering report later said that the footing would not hold the extra weight. The next plan was to add a modest addition to the stack block of the Library. In 1959, the new vice-president, Dr. L. H. Cragg, suggested that the request was too modest and that the Rutherford Library building should be doubled in the near future instead of in 1965 as originally proposed.

DATE DUE SLIP

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Floor lay-outs had been drafted for the expanded building which was to consist of a large rectangular core of book stacks with various library reading rooms and other functions located around the perimeter. Working with the lay-out, the Librarian became increasingly concerned about the problems of organization and recommended that a library consultant, Dr. Keyes D. Metcalfe, be called upon for advice. In August, 1960, Dr. Metcalfe visited the campus and pointed out that the proposed expanded library would be unsatisfactory from the day it was occupied. He suggested that a new library building be started. The planning of the D. E. Cameron Library began immediately. The excavation of the site began in August 1962; the building was completed in September, 1963. The move to the new library began in the third week of November, and was completed by December 9th.

The new Education Library wing was occupied in mid-September of 1963.

The story is told of a professor who came into the Library during the depression years, when a dollar was a dollar, and who was heard to mutter, "I would give ten dollars if all my books were to be found on a single shelf as in the early days". In 1964, when consideration is being given to using IBM in circulation control and of using computers for information retrieval, one wonders if that early professor didn't have a good idea; at least the life of a librarian would be a lot simpler.

Rutherford Library Mural depicting early Alberta history. H. G. Glyde





Cameron Library - Lobby



John Bunyan Collection, Summer, 1964
President W. H. Johns, Miss D. I. Hamilton,
Dr. J. F. Forrest

Students at work



Library staff - Christmas, 1962



A14183



Designed by Ron Solms